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December 6, 2005

Cathy Seidel, Acting Chief
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Status of 800 MHz Band Reconfiguration
WT Docket 02-55

Dear Ms. Seidel:

This letter is in response to a recommendation from Sprint Nextel, in a letter dated December 1, 2005, that the Commission move the “start date” of the 800 MHz band reconfiguration from June 27, 2005, to sixty (60) days following *Federal Register* publication of the Commission’s *Memorandum Opinion and Order* (released October 5, 2005), which addressed petitions for reconsideration of prior orders in this proceeding. Sprint Nextel does not further elaborate on the consequences of such a modification. The Commission should move quickly to reject this suggestion, as the mere possibility of an extension of time creates uncertainly and further delay.

Our organizations have participated throughout this proceeding as the principal representatives of the police, fire, EMS, and other first responders whose 800 MHz radios communication systems face potentially deadly interference from CMRS licensees in the band. We helped to forge the “consensus plan” that provided the basis for the Commission’s initial order in this proceeding, and we continue to work closely with all interested parties to pursue rebanding in an expeditious manner that will eliminate interference without imposing costs upon state or local governments or disrupting vital emergency communications systems.

We oppose the Sprint Nextel recommendation as it would cause at least a seven month delay in band reconfiguration and disrupt the entire process established by the Commission and the Transition Administrator. Band reconfiguration must be kept on a tight schedule to eliminate dangerous interference to public safety systems as quickly as possible.

We agree that the reconfiguration process has moved slower than anticipated, and have expressed specific concern regarding the very slow pace of approvals for Requests for Planning Funding, an essential first step for most public safety licensees. However, pushing out the implementation dates by seven months or more is *not* the answer. Rather, Sprint Nextel and the Transition Administrator, with oversight from the FCC, need to work hard to clear bottlenecks in the process.

While we oppose a blanket time extension at this point, we urge that public safety agencies not be prejudiced in any way by delays that are beyond their control. For example, delays in approval of Requests for Planning Funding should not limit the time available for public safety agencies to plan, negotiate, or implement reconfiguration agreements.

We look forward to working with the Commission, the Transition Administrator, Sprint Nextel, and others to ensure that 800 MHz band reconfiguration proceeds in a timely and effective manner.

Respectfully submitted,



Gregory Ballentine
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cc: Larry Krevor, Esq.
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